

Parents of the Pandemic

The Education Lockdown and its Impact on Homeschooling in America



A Research Study conducted by Campbell Rinker
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Introduction

America has been at crossroads before. And in the spring of 2020, the country faced another defining moment: millions of U.S. school children were sent home from school amid a threatening outbreak of the coronavirus, COVID-19. The scourge, eventually classified as a pandemic by the World Health Organization, kept children home in every state in the nation, even in the few states which did not call for sheltering in place.

In this report, through a dozen charts, scores of graphs, and thousands of personal comments to help illustrate their findings, Campbell Rinker relates how these parents of the pandemic have coped with the demands of educating at home. Their experiences provide a revealing look into American parenting in the early 21st Century and their surprising willingness to consider new models of at-home learning.

Methodology

The Parents of the Pandemic poll was conducted May 16-27, 2020 among 631 online respondents who were double opt-in members of a panel run by Dynata.

The 631 respondents to the study deliver a margin of error of $\pm 3.9\%$ at the 95% confidence level; results would be within this margin for 19 in 20 studies conducted in a similar way.

This study was fielded while the country emerged from shelter-in-place orders instituted by the governors of most US states, amid a worldwide pandemic due to the COVID-19 virus. Virtually every school in the country was closed, even in states where no lockdown was instituted.

To participate, parents of school age children (who comprise 27 percent of the US population), were recruited and asked to affirm they had children at home and out of school due to the pandemic lockdowns. (A few parents had homeschooled in the past or were homeschooling one child when the lockdowns went into place, but all these had at least one child home due to the pandemic.) Respondents were further validated by examining the thoughtfulness of the answers they gave to verbatim questions. Hundreds were disqualified and replaced due to open-ended responses that did not apply.

Some questions in the survey were asked only of a subset of respondents. In these cases, the researchers have indicated the number of respondents (n) in charts and tables. The number indicated in parentheses in table headings is the quantity of respondents in a subgroup who answered, e.g. (249).

Bolded percentages in tables indicate a significant difference for that response option in that cohort compared to the cohort's counterpart(s).